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CONTENTS

	<u>PAGE</u>
■ Browning in Philippines: 'Visitation of A Friend' (87248)	1
■ Presiding Bishop Makes Public Ministries Appointments (87249)	11
■ Haiti's Garnier Deplores Meddling (87250)	13
■ Province IX Charts Course For the Future (87251)	16
■ ECW Looks Ahead to Triennial Meeting (87252)	18
■ Picture Captions: Latin American Anglican Conference (87253)	20
■ Presiding Bishop's Address to Executive Council (87254)	21
■ Notes to Editors (87255)	28

BROWNING IN PHILIPPINES:'VISITATION OF A FRIEND'

DPS 87248

by Richard Henshaw, Jr.

"There is pain beyond these cathedral walls which most of us can barely comprehend. " (The Presiding Bishop at his Installation in January 1986.)

(Manila, DPS, Dec. 17) Presiding Bishop Edmond L. Browning ended a ten-day visitation to the Philippine Episcopal Church convinced that the Philippine Episcopal Church may be without equal among Anglican churches in its commitment to ministering in the face of violence, death, and oppression.

The trip, purposely placed early in the Presiding Bishop's 12-year cycle of diocesan visitations, developed into a profoundly moving journey to the cutting edge of the Church, in which much was given and received by both visitor and hosts.

The Presiding Bishop's low key personal style and obvious sympathy with the Philippine Episcopal Church's plight prompted the Bishop of the Northern Philippines, the Rt. Rev. Robert Longid, to tell a gathering of his priests: "now we know we have a friend in Edmond L. Browning. "

There were smiles and applause approving. That session, however, and others like it in each diocese the Bishop visited, revealed the deadly serious circumstances in which Filipino clergy minister.

The overt political dangers facing the Philippine Episcopal Church were dramatically brought home during the visitation when two car bomb explosions went off in Manila in locations where the Presiding Bishop or members of his party had been standing only days before.

DPS 87248/2

The Presiding Bishop heard of a church that finds it "very hard to preach salvation in the midst of guns and death," as one priest described it, and, together with the United Church of Christ in the Philippines, is taking a leading role in social action and reconciliation ministries, especially among minority groups and tribal mountain people who until a generation ago were headhunters.

"At the same time," said the Presiding Bishop at a meeting in Bulanao, diocese of Northern Luzon, "no potential provinces looking to autonomy have done as much as the Philippine Episcopal Church to prepare themselves." The four dioceses of the Philippine Episcopal Church, now linked to Province VIII of the American church, are scheduled to attain autonomy as a province of the Anglican Communion sometime after Jan. 1, 1989.

Travelling with the Presiding Bishop were Mrs. Browning, the Rev. J. Patrick Mauney, Partnership Officer for Asia and the Pacific in the World Mission office at Episcopal Church Center, and this correspondent. Mauney, whose visits to the Philippine Episcopal Church and other churches in South and East Asia have been frequent since assuming his present post in April, was instrumental in laying the ground work for the visitation and served as the Presiding Bishop's consultant throughout the trip.

The Philippine Episcopal Church is a small Christian body in an overwhelmingly Roman Catholic country (80 percent.) But since before the turn of the century, when U.S. Army Chaplain C.C. Pierce instituted a mission among minority people, its strength has been in ministering where the Roman Catholics have been reluctant to go.

There are now well over 400 congregations, the vast majority rural mission stations with minority or local tribal membership. Baptized members now stand at around 92,000, perhaps a third of whom are highly active in congregational life. There are 160 clergy, over 500 lay workers, and about 95 schools, hospitals, and other institutions.

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The Presiding Bishop opened the visitation in Manila, diocese of Central Philippines, by paying calls on St. Andrews's Theological Seminary, which trains all Philippine Episcopal Church clergy and many from other Southeast Asian countries as well, St. Luke's Medical Center, one of the Philippines' leading hospitals, and Trinity College, all on the cathedral heights, close to Quezon city. An opening service was held also at the Cathedral of St. Mary and St. John. After autonomy it is probable that the diocese of Central Philippines will divide into two: the Diocese of Manila and the Diocese of Baguio to the north. The present bishops, the Rt. Rev. Manuel C. Lumpias, who is now serving a rotating term as Prime Bishop of the Philippine Episcopal Church, has not announced his personal intentions when the diocese splits.

An important aspect of the Presiding Bishop's visit to Manila was a dinner meeting with the Obispo Maximo (Prime Bishop) of the Philippine Independent Church, with whom the Episcopal Church is in full communion and continues to enjoy the most cordial relations. The Philippine Independent Church was founded in 1902 by nationalistic Filipino Roman Catholics following independence from Spain, and received the apostolic succession from the Episcopal Church. Philippine Independent Church clergy are trained at St. Andrew's Seminary. Its liturgical practice is catholic and there are now five million members in 33 diocese and one missionary diocese in North American, making it by far the largest non Roman Catholic body in the country.

One purpose of the Presiding Bishop's talks with the present Obispo Maximo, the Most Rev. Soliman F. Ganno, was to reinvigorate the 1983 Honolulu agreement signed by the Philippine Independent Church and the Episcopal Church in the United States, by which further cooperation is envisioned, especially relating to ministering among Philippine Independent Church members who have emigrated to North America.

The primary purpose of the visitation, however, was to pay extended visits to the Episcopal dioceses of Southern Philippines, the Northern Philippines, and Northern Luzon.

DPS 87248/4

After less than 48 hours in Manila, the Presiding Bishop and his party flew directly to the Southern Diocese on the Equatorial Island of Mindanao, the second largest of 7,000 islands in the Philippines. The diocese of Southern Philippines has about 20 parishes and missions, each supporting as many as 20 mission stations.

Mindanao is one of several danger zones in the Philippines. Some of the island's 85 percent majority of Muslims are attempting to turn the Mindanao into the Islamic Republic of Moro with help from Libya and elsewhere. The omnipresent Philippine Army persists, other guerilla groups seek their own political goals, and into this fray have marched many of the more active priests and lay leaders of the diocese, seeking to reconcile and save souls.

Flash points tend to vary from year to year. Now it would appear that Davao city, with about three political murders per night on the average, -- is the worst spot to be in. Several Episcopal priests are working in the Davao region - but a continuing concern, according to priests discussed the situation with the Presiding Bishop, is the government's policy of fostering "low intensity conflict," by which paramilitary groups and vigilantes who acting on behalf of army regulars, commit "small" acts of terrorism and sabotage to keep the population on edge and the Muslim community destabilized. This policy, which is being carried out under President Aquino as it was under President Marcos, is thought by the priests to have the backing of the United States.

Low intensity conflict is of particular concern to the Philippine Episcopal Church on Mindanao, because the diocese has long had friendly relations with the Muslim majority - almost half of the students at the Brent Hospital School of Midwifery are Muslim, for example- and this puts the Philippine Episcopal Church and its members in physical danger.

The Rev. Fernando Boyagan, rector of St. Thomas', South Cotabato, was anxious for the Presiding Bishop to know that some of his parishioners have been murdered by "people who thought they were communists - probably by the military."

The Rev. James Manguramas, rector of St. Francis', Nuro, Upi, says: "We are marked people now. We are being watched. It is a very hot issue here. The moment we deal with people, i.e., minister to people regardless of their affiliation, we are confronted.". These comments and others like them were made in an informal two-hour clericus with the Presiding Bishop at the Cathedral of St. Peter and St. Paul in Cotabato City. It was the first in a series of similar meetings conducted by the Presiding Bishop in each of the three dioceses he visited. These gatherings would prove to be the cornerstones of the visitation and a source of valuable information for the Presiding Bishop and Mauney.

Of the intense witness being provided by the Church in Mindanao, the Presiding Bishop said: "I think the ministry of the church is to be in the midst of all that," i.e., conflict and strife. Then, sounding a principal theme of the visitation to the Philippine Episcopal Church, he added: "maybe it's just the ministry of presence - offering the gospel of hope. Part of the answer is to 'stay there'." At Zamboanga City, the famous seafaring "city of flowers" at the top of the Sulu archipelago, the Presiding Bishop visited the Brent hospital, pleasantly situated on the beachfront overlooking the Basilan Strait, and preached at a service in his honor next door at Holy Trinity Church.

At Good Shepherd Mission on the outskirts of Zamboanga City, several hundred children from the mission school turned out to greet him and his party with song and dance. A pattern of huge and colorful welcoming parties such as this remained with Browning throughout the visit.

The third leg of the Presiding Bishop's visitation began with an all-day drive over mostly unpaved roads to reach the mountain province village of Bontoc. This remote place, nestled among spectacularly beautiful, rice terraced mountains reaching 3,000 meters, is an unlikely setting for one of Anglicanism's most important centers.

Yet, the mountain province region of the diocese of the Northern Philippines has produced about 75 percent of all Philippine Episcopal Church clergy in recent years - even priests assigned to distant Mindanao will

DPS 87248/6

often turn out to be from the mountain province - and the Cathedral of all Saints in the village of Bontoc , with 2,300 members, is the largest Episcopal congregation in the country.

The diocese of the Northern Philippines, largest in the Philippine Episcopal Church, has 35,000 baptized members, about 40 parishes and missions, supporting scores of additional mission stations, and 45 clergy. Its bishop since 1983 has been the dynamic Rt. Rev. Robert L.O. Longid, who is generally assumed to be next "in line" to become Prime Bishop of the Philippine Episcopal Church and will probably be the first of the newly autonomous Province of the Philippines.

Throughout the Cordellera Mountain region of the diocese, the Presiding Bishop , Mrs. Browning, and the rest of the party were welcomed by huge gatherings of church people, usually dressed in native Bontoc or Kalinga costume, and elaborate celebrations were staged to honor the guests. As the days passed, the Presiding Bishop began to recognize subtle differences in Bontoc versus Kalinga customs and spirituality, but he was especially touched when well-trained choruses of school children or Episcopal Church women sang welcoming songs, some composed in English especially for the occasion. At one of the first such ceremonies, nearly 2,000 people welcomed the Presiding Bishop to St. Bernard's parish at Kin-iway, Besao.

The men of St. Anne's aided parish, Besao, led the welcoming procession dressed only in the traditional loincloth, each hitting his gong gently with a wooden mallet. The 15-inch gongs are the most important traditional instruments of Bontocs and Kalingas, each family passing down its own valuable instrument from generation to generation.

The enormous crowd that surrounded the performing area was for the only time during the course of this visitation--so far as is known--peppered with armed guerillas from the Cordillera People's Liberation Army, a relatively small paramilitary insurgency force that is combatting the Philippine Army. The militiamen were in Kin-iway to recruit new members.

That night the Presiding Bishop's party stayed overnight at St. Joseph's Rest House in Sagada, a commercial hostel that is operated by the Episcopal Order of St. Mary-the-Virgin. Mother Clare and the two sisters who help her maintain the facility not only run one of the best rest houses in Northern Luzon but share liturgical responsibilities at St. Mary-the-Virgin parish just down the hill. One quaint sign composed by the sisters for the St. Joseph's bathroom reads: "please close this door gently. If you close it hard, the whole building shakes.".

Sagada is also the home of the last American missionary in the Philippines, a legend in his own time, Dr. William Henry Scott ("scotty"). Choosing to remain in the lay rather than ordained ministry, Scott came to the Philippines in 1953 after getting booted out of China with other foreign missionaries. He is an historian, who has taught at St. Andrew's Seminary and written over two dozen books and papers on the Philippine Episcopal Church and Philippine Independent Church. By now there is hardly an Episcopalian in the Philippines who does not know him. Like so many others who are active in the human rights struggle and other reconciling ministries in the Philippines, he was jailed for a period of time during the Marcos years.

The Presiding Bishop, who had extended talks with him during the visit, expressed the importance of Scott's published and unpublished work making their way into the archives of the Episcopal Church. ("Scotty" is also organist at St. Mary-the-Virgin parish church in Sagada.)

At the much smaller and even more remote, St. Michael's Mission, Guina-ang, the following day, the Presiding Bishop ate mudfish for the first time, and in a steady drizzle he was treated to another huge celebration of his arrival. Nearly everybody from surrounding mountain villages attended, along with the 300 members of St. Michael's. One dance for this occasion was performed by a group consisting of mothers of young children.

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DPS 87248/8

Despite the warmth and joy displayed by one parish and village after another, the centerpiece of the Presiding Bishop's visit to the diocese of the Northern Philippines was the scheduled off-the-cuff meeting at diocesan headquarters with clergy and lay leaders. As in the Southern diocese a few days earlier, he heard of a church that is determined to help people find faith in Jesus Christ, but one whose time, energy, and resources are first of all, needed to help save homes, families and even lives.

Twenty villages in the area have started wars with each other in recent years, and the diocese, through its priests, is taking an active role in mediating.

The Northern Philippines region contains the headwaters for eight river systems, bountiful minerals, forests, and other resources, but corrupt officials in the government, which owns 82 percent of the land, are giving it to big contractors, and multi-nationals. The Bontocs, meanwhile, are being squeezed out of their ancient land holdings and into towns and cities where there are no jobs. The social concerns office of the diocese is attempting to do what it can to lead government officials to find more beneficial development policies and practices, and to convince the people to participate in decision-making processes.

In certain deaneries of the diocese, insurgency movements are a major concern. Incidents flare up regularly, usually involving the new people's army, the primary communist-backed guerilla movement, Philippine regulars, or the indigenous Cordillera People's Liberation Army on the right.

The machete that was used to hack to death a priest only last year has been recovered, and is now in Bishop Longid's keeping in the diocesan office at Bontoc. The Presiding Bishop met the Rev. Gabino Mamilig, vicar of St. Mary's Mission, Addang, Mountain Province, who earlier this year had narrowly avoided being shot by pushing the rifle away with his out-stretched arm as it went off at point blank range.

Among the most active departments in the Northern Philippines diocese are those of social concerns, community development, and resources. Community

development alone employs three people although it was organized only this year. An important water works program for Mountain Province is serving as an entry point to organized community development. It is stressed that most development projects are designed to be self-supporting. The people have no confidence that local or national government agencies will provide meaningful services at any time soon.

Nearly all diocesan offices are staffed with lay people, because the extreme shortage of priests requires that they be involved in parochial work almost exclusively. All priests oversee, at the very least, a cluster of mission stations and possibly a parish or mission church as well.

In Mountain Province, it is clear that the Episcopal Church long ago staked out its position in the society it seeks to serve: the side of peace and justice, or, as Filipinos prefer to put it, "justice and peace."

PICTURE CAPTIONS:

(87248/1) The Presiding Bishop (right) with the Bishop of the Northern Philippines, the Rt. Rev. Robert L.O. Longid arriving at St. Benedict's, Kin-iway, Mountain Province.

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(87248/2) The village elder (right) at Kin-iway, Mountain Province, makes the traditional welcoming statement, as the Presiding Bishop (center) and his party listen.

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(87248/3) Members of the Cordillera People's Liberation Army (CPLA), such as this guerilla (left), appeared in the crowd to welcome the Presiding Bishop to Kin-iway, Mountain Province. An anti-Communist insurgency based in the mountains, CPLA members happened to be in the village that week seeking recruits and dropped in for a look.

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(87248/4) The Rev. Gabino Mamilig, Vicar at St. Mary's Mission, Addang, Mountain Province, who earlier this year narrowly avoided being shot by pushing the rifle away with his outstretched arm as it went off at

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DPS 87248/10

point blank range. Many priests in the northern and southern dioceses face violence in their ministries of presence and reconciliation.

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DIOCESAN PRESS SERVICE/ Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

PRESIDING BISHOP MAKES

PUBLIC MINISTRIES APPOINTMENTS

DPS 87249

NEW YORK (DPS, Dec. 17) -- The Presiding Bishop has made the following appointments to the public ministries staff cluster in the National Mission in Church and Society program unit: Diane Porter, deputy for Public Ministries; the Rev. Brian J. Grieves, Peace and Justice staff officer; Betty A. Coats and the Rev. Robert J. Brooks, Washington Office staff officers.

Porter has an extensive background in community development, planning and administration. Most recently she was chief of staff for Congressman Edolphus Town, 11th Congressional District, Brooklyn, NY. As deputy for Public Ministries, Porter will provide administrative support for the executive for National Mission in Church and Society and will develop and manage the overall work of the Public Ministries staff cluster. This cluster includes the Church's national public ministry policy programs of Jubilee ministry, Peace and Justice, Social and Specialized Ministries and the Washington Office. She will also have responsibilities for hunger networking and advocacy.

Brian Grieves served in the Diocese of Hawaii where he was the founding chairman of the Peace and Justice Commission. He has been actively involved in a wide range of advocacy issues, including racism, disarmament, and peace education. In the new position of Peace and Justice staff officer, Grieves will be responsible for program development and support in the areas of peace education and economic justice issues. He will also be a staff linkage to the Social Responsibility in Investment committee of the Executive Council, and will manage the Public Policy Network.

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DPS 87249/2

Dr. Coats has an extensive background in social policy development with an emphasis on public policy affecting children. As a consultant to the Episcopal Church Center, Coats designed and conducted a four-month survey of constituent groups and individuals to learn from them how the Washington Office and inter-related Church Center ministries could best serve their needs.

Robert Brooks brings a broad range of experience in public policy development, legislative advocacy, and ecumenical relations. He has an impressive record in these areas from his service on the Texas Statewide Health Coordinating Council. As both a public official and a priest, Brooks has lived out a theology of the relation of church and state, and has developed skills to enable an effective ministry of witness from the Washington Office.

The Washington Office staff officers share responsibility for developing the following areas: constituency service (official bodies of the Episcopal Church, Washington area Episcopalians in government, independent agencies of the Episcopal Church, Episcopal networks), advocacy, policy development, linkage, and in the development of these programs, maintenance of ecumenical relations in the pursuit of these objectives, management of the office, development and maintenance of an intern program, linkage with the Episcopal Church Center staff, and direct service to and with the Office of the Presiding Bishop in relation to his ministry.

All of the new staff will assume their duties effective January 1, 1988. The appointment of a staff officer for Jubilee Ministry will be made sometime early in 1988.

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HAITI'S GARNIER

DEPLORES MEDDLING

DPS 87250

by Linda M. Logan

Diocese of East Tennessee

CHATTANOOGA, Tenn. (DPS, Dec. 17) -- The U.S. government should quit dictating policy to the world's oldest black republic, the Rt. Rev. Luc Garnier, Episcopal bishop of Haiti, said here Dec. 3. "We are tired of it," he said.

"If you cannot help in a humanitarian way, then keep your money. We have been poor. We will be poor, but we would like to keep our personalities. People should not dictate to us what we should do and how we should do things."

Garnier was in Chattanooga to address the annual convention of the Episcopal Diocese of East Tennessee. The meeting marked the start of a three-year companion relationship between the Episcopal Diocese of Haiti and that of East Tennessee.

The bishop's visit came within days of the aborted national elections in Haiti, called off Nov. 29 following bloody election eve violence that left at least 34 people dead. The cut-off in all non-humanitarian aid by the U.S. government following the cancellation of the election was what prompted Garnier's remarks to the press.

Without U.S. aid -- which Garnier said was contingent upon agreement to conditions outlined by the U.S. government -- the process toward the democratization of Haiti will be slower, but, "we'll do what we can with what we have," he said.

The Haitian constitution adopted last March requires a new president to be inaugurated by Feb. 7, 1988, to replace the military junta which has ruled the country since the Feb. 7, 1986 uprising which ended nearly 30 years of dictatorship by the Duvalier family -- Francois "Papa Doc" Duvalier and his son Jean-Claude. Whether or not the elections will be held by the stipulated date, Garnier did not know; but he said the U.S. government should let the Haitian people "choose our own people freely."

DPS 87250/2

The bishop said that the U.S. government was instrumental both in maintaining the Duvaliers in power and in overthrowing Jean-Claude; and now, he added, "We see that you are working in such a way that you could occupy my country. You did it in 1915. We hate it and we are willing to fight against it. It is a game that you are playing and we are not happy about it."

"Since 1804 we have been independent, and we are not willing to give that up," Garnier said.

The Episcopal Church in Haiti does not get involved directly in politics, recommending one candidate over another, Garnier said. "This is not the mission of the Church." Instead, he said, the Church helps prepare its lay people "to choose the next government" and to recognize when candidates are "saying the truth."

The Episcopal Church has 84,000 communicants in a country of 6.3 million people. With an illiteracy rate of 85 percent and a government unable to provide its citizens with sufficient public services, the involvement of the Church in "the social aspect of the country" is widely felt, Garnier said.

The Episcopal Church operates 130 elementary, secondary, and professional schools in Haiti, and this with only 29 clergy. But, Garnier pointed out, with all private and church-run schools in the country factored in, only 60 percent of the nation's children go to school.

Garnier said the Episcopal Church also helps take up the government's slack in terms of medical services, running, with the Presbyterian Church, "one of the best hospitals in the country." The Hospital Ste. Croix at Leogane -- which is directed by Dr. David McNeely of Norris, Tenn. -- operates a preventive medicine program "so good that the government has signed a contract with the Church giving it full responsibility for the poor in the area as far as health is concerned," Garnier said.

"It is a way of preaching the gospel of God. It is a way of being the disciples of our Lord who himself sent word back to John the Baptist: "'Go and tell him what you have seen and what you have heard.'"

"The gospel concerns the whole human being--education, health, body and soul," the bishop said. "You cannot preach about the soul of someone that is in a body which is suffering, that doesn't have enough to eat."

The companion relationship undertaken by the Episcopal dioceses of Haiti and East Tennessee will start "by sharing our lives together, getting to know one another," the Rt. Rev. William E. Sanders, Episcopal bishop of East Tennessee, told the delegates gathered for the opening service at Grace Church, Dec. 3.

"We need to learn the dangers of their lives," he said. "We need to understand their aspirations. We need to understand how our way of life and our assumptions at times may have a devastating impact upon their way of life and their aspirations. We need to know what it means to be sacrificial and risk-taking as Christians in a country that is afflicted with such terror as it faces at this time."

"I welcome this possibility," Sanders said, "of broadening our understanding in the household of faith as a people of God called in an age of violence, an age of hopelessness, an age of deep want--called to proclaim justice and peace and freedom."

"Perhaps from them we can learn as they have learned that the Church can make a difference in its impact on the social scene....for the hope that is in Haiti on this day has been given to it by the witness of the Church in that area and by its leadership and by its courage."

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PROVINCE IX CHARTS COURSE

FOR THE FUTURE

DPS 87251

SANTO DOMINGO, Dominican Republic (DPS, Dec. 17) -- The tenth synod of Province IX of the Episcopal Church in Latin America met here (Dec. 1-4) under the general theme of "unity, commitment and participation."

The work of the synod was preceded by a day-and-a-half training session on stewardship and autonomy where participants explored the close relationship between the two. "Without stewardship we cannot be autonomous," said the Rev. Benito Juarez, a Mexican priest who served as one of the facilitators.

The synod heard reports on the autonomy plans for the Central American region as well as the Caribbean region and ARENSA, the northern region of South America. It was reported that the dioceses were almost ready to form a province which may eventually become an autonomous province within the Anglican Communion. Before a new province can be formed, the dioceses will have to request permission individually to leave the General Convention of the Episcopal Church.

The synod also passed resolutions expressing concern for the situations in Haiti and Central America, and asked Episcopalians to pray and work for peace.

The synod also heard a report of the recent Latin American Anglican Congress, and empowered the Synod President to meet with the primates of the Southern Cone and Brazil in order to carry out the recommendations of the congress. The group is scheduled to meet early in January in Caracas, Venezuela.

In a resolution presented by Bishop Onell A. Soto of Venezuela, the synod requested that a small consultation be held before Lambeth in order to study the concept of authority in the Anglican Communion as understood in the Latin American context. It also requested that the Church in Latin America contribute ideas and suggestions to the whole Anglican Communion in areas such as evangelism, social involvement, and family life.

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DPS 87251/2

This is the first time that the synod has met in the Dominican Republic. "We have waited for this moment for 30 years," said host Bishop Telesforo Isaac.

The synod re-elected as president Bishop James H. Ottley of Panama who was serving the unexpired term of the late Bishop Leonardo Romero of Northern Mexico. Bishop Samuel Espinoza of Western Mexico was elected vice-president. Virginia Norman, treasurer of the Province since 1972, was re-elected.

The synod also accepted the invitation of Bishop Leo Frade of Honduras to meet in Tegucigalpa in 1990.

Province IX was established by action of the 1984 General Convention to gather together the Spanish-speaking dioceses in the area. In recent years Costa Rica and Puerto Rico have requested their autonomy and are now extra-provincial dioceses, along with Venezuela which was transferred from the Province of the West Indies.

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DIOCESAN PRESS SERVICE/ Episcopal Church Center 212/867-8400

ECW LOOKS AHEAD TO

TRIENNIAL MEETING

DPS 87252

NEW YORK (DPS, Dec. 17) --The Episcopal Church Women have their eyes on the future. Chief among their concerns at present are plans for their Triennial Meeting to be held in Detroit (July 1 - July 9). The ECW has already chosen a hopeful and positive theme for the triennial, "Behold! New Life, New Vision." The organization has also released the name of the woman who will serve as spiritual guide for the Triennial Meeting, the Very Rev. Geralyn Wolf, dean of Christ Church Cathedral in Louisville, Ky.

Wolf, the first woman priest in the Episcopal Church to be elected dean of a cathedral, responds with enthusiasm to the Triennial theme. "The Church in its own life articulates new life born out of a vision others have had," she said, "bearing fruits of that vision and envisioning our future ... Whenever there is new life, there are always those who want to cling to the old life, too. The Isaiah passage accompanying the theme (45: 19-21) is powerful, and reminds us that new things envisioned come out of barrenness and wilderness and interplay part of our heritage as a church and a people."

The ECW board has also announced the appointment of Eleanor A. Siewart as parliamentarian for the Triennial Meeting. Siewart summed up her own role in the meeting in this way: "...it will be my role to assist the chair and the delegates as they seek full participation in setting forth new visions for the ECW."

An ongoing concern of the ECW has been the "Women of Vision" program, a skills training program developed by the organization in cooperation with the Women in Mission and Ministry office at the Episcopal Church Center. Information about the program may be obtained by contacting the management team coordinator Joyce Hogg, 165-17 65th Avenue, Flushing, N.Y., 11365.

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DPS 87252/2

The ECW has announced the release of two new resources, a brochure entitled "Who We Are - What We Are", and a comprehensive Resource Booklet. The brochure, which presents an historical overview of the organization, also includes the ECW hymn and prayer. The publication is \$15.00 for 100 copies. The Resource Booklet, listing programs and speakers of interest to ECW groups, costs \$2.00 a copy. Both resources may be ordered by writing to Marjorie A. Burke, 120 Simonds Road, Lexington, MA 02173. Checks should be made payable to Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society.

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PICTURE CAPTIONS

Latin American Anglican Conference

(87253/1) The Rt. Rev. Maurice M. Benitez, bishop of Texas, represented the Presiding Bishop at the Latin American Anglican Conference last month in Panama. The first-ever gathering -- billed as a "mini-Lambeth" -- brought together bishops, other clergy and laity from every diocese in Central and South America as well as representatives from Iberia and among the hispanic congregations of the United States. Benitez is greeted here by members of San Sebastian Church in Panama.

(87253/2) The Rev. Jaci Maraschin of the University of Sao Paulo, and Marylou Schiller of Caracas, Venezuela, chat during a break at the recent Latin Americasn Anglican Congress in Panama. Marascin, delivered on of the keynote addresses for the pioneering meeting.

(87253/3) The Rev. Patricia Powers, an Episcopal Church missionary to the diocese of Brasilia helps administer Communion during the Latin American Anglican Conference last month in Panama. Powers, who is supported by the Daughters of the King in her missionary work at the diocesan cathedral, was concelebrant at the Eucharist on the day the Province of Brazil celebrated.

(87253/4) The Rt. Rev. Victor Rivera, right, and the Rt. Rev. William Godfrey of Uruguay talk during a break at the recent Latin American Anglican Conference in Panama. Rivera, a native of Puerto Rico, is bishop of San Joaquin and led the delegation representing U.S. Hispanics at the conference.

(Editors: These pictures and captions accompany DPS 87243 "Latin American Congress Challenges Anglicanism" which ran Dec. 10.)

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THE PRESIDING BISHOP'S  
MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIR  
THE EXECUTIVE COUNCIL  
NOVEMBER 17-20, 1987

DPS 87254

Christian education is more than printed curriculum, creative and imaginative teacher's aids, or the process and techniques of leadership training. The bottom line of Christian education is not pedagogical, it is ethical: will the person choose good or evil?

Each Sunday morning thousands of Episcopalians attend church for corporate worship, to hear sermons and to participate in educational forums. On Monday morning these same people join the mainstream of American life. Does their Sunday experience shape and inform their everyday lives?

Each Sunday children and young adults participate in Church School and youth activities in our congregations. In school, on the athletic field, in the streets and at the weekend dances, does their Sunday experience shape and inform their everyday lives?

During the week Episcopalians meet in small groups for prayer and for Bible study. In homes, offices and in volunteer outreach programs, does this experience shape and inform their everyday lives?

In our seminaries, hundreds of students are studying the Bible, reading theology, developing homiletical and pastoral skills. After their three years' course of study, does this experience enter and continue to shape and inform their everyday lives?

Each day when the Speaker of the House of Representatives and the President Pro Tem of the Senate call their respective legislative chambers into session, sixty-three Episcopalians join their colleagues in legislative deliberations which touch on the domestic and international affairs of our nation. Does their religious experience shape and inform their everyday lives?

There are many who claim that Episcopalians are biblically and theologically illiterate.

There are some who suggest that Episcopalians have their faith shaped more by sociology than by the Bible and theology.

There are some who, in reflecting critically on Christian education and faith formation in the Episcopal Church, quote Socrates' rhetorical question in Plato's Republic: "Shall we carelessly allow children to hear any casual tales which may be devised by casual persons, and to receive into their minds ideas for the most part the very opposite of those which we shall wish them to have when they grow up?"

And, in his scathing critique of higher education in the United States, Allan Bloom in his book The Closing of the American Mind does not pass over contemporary religious teaching. He writes: "The dreariness of the family's spiritual landscape passes belief. It is as monochrome and

unrelated to those who pass through it as are the barren steppes frequented by nomads who take their mere subsistence and move on. The delicate fabric of the civilization into which the successive generations are woven has unraveled, and children are raised, not educated."

I want you to know that I heard this Council's concern expressed at our last meeting about Christian education in the Episcopal Church. As I go about the Church today I hear from many who join you in a deep concern about Christian education. Your comments and theirs have helped me focus my thinking on this subject over the past several months. And, that concern is evident as I look at the mission imperative statements developed by this Council at our last two meetings. It has certainly been a top priority for me as I have outlined my concerns and learning from the past two years. I shared some of this at the recent meeting of the House of Bishops.

The concern for Christian Education across the Church is expressed in the growing number of calls we get at the Episcopal Church Center for consultation in education, for conferences dealing with education, and for print, video and computer resources to assist the local congregations in their educational ministries. We also receive many inquiries searching for a curriculum to assist those who teach in Sunday Schools, sharing their faith in the faith formation of others.

The concern about Christian education was expressed most strongly at the last General Convention when I was instructed by resolution to appoint a blue ribbon task force to study the history of Christian education in the Church, to examine the present state of Christian education and to make recommendations for future action to the upcoming General Convention. I am pleased to tell you today that this task force, composed of key educators in our Church, has been meeting for the past year to carry out the directives of that resolution. On Thursday of this week, this Task Force will preview for you the report they will be forwarding to Convention next summer. It is my expectation that this report will augment the mission imperatives.

Without preempting the report of the Christian Education Task Force, I want to put forward what I perceive as the goal and context of Christian education in the Episcopal Church.

Christian education in the Episcopal Church must enable every person to participate in the saving mission of the Church itself.

Christian education in the Episcopal Church must empower every person to be a missionary and evangelist.

Christian education in the Episcopal Church must encourage every person to assume the task of renewing the social order.

Christian education in the Episcopal Church must challenge every person, in response to the Baptismal Covenant, to penetrate and sanctify the world of industry, education, finance, politics and the arts and sciences.

If Christian education in the Episcopal Church accepts any lesser goal, we will have accepted failure.

I want to challenge this Church to channel its concern about the content, quality and experience of Christian education into creative and

DPS 87254/3

imaginative action. I want to challenge this Church to accept the highest goals for its Christian education and to provide the resources commensurate with those goals. And, I want to challenge every Episcopalian to take the steps necessary to know the Word of God, to take it to heart, to live it out at home, at school, at work, and in the streets of our cities and towns; and, to hand it on to the next generation.

This summer I participated in one of the most exciting and frightening events -- the National Episcopal Youth Event. Exciting because of the energy that was present and generated by the 1,650 young people in attendance; and, frightening because of the expectations and anticipation that are held up for us by our young adults. While at this event, I met Trevor -- a meeting that brought alive for me the words of St. Paul to Timothy: "All scripture is inspired by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, equipped for every good work."

Some of you will recall the story of Trevor which was widely publicized several years ago. Trevor, a young boy of about twelve, was watching the local evening news. One of the feature stories that night dealt with the growing number of street people who were suffering from the cold. The camera panned and focused on one man who was standing in front of a well known building in the downtown section of the city. The boy walked into the other room where his father was reading the paper and asked if he could take a pillow and a blanket to the man he had just seen on television. His father at first resisted the idea. It was a cold night, after all. What good would one blanket and one pillow do in a city filled with hungry and homeless people? The response of his son convinced him. "You take me to Sunday School and Church," Trevor reminded his father, "and our teachers tell us that we should care about the poor and the homeless. That's why I want to go downtown tonight."

Well, the pillow and blanket that were delivered to one homeless man on the street that evening led to a lot more blankets and pillows offered to the hungry and homeless people of Philadelphia in the months to come. When Trevor offered the gift to the stranger, he received a warm "God bless you," in response. And, indeed, there was a blessing in the gift as it was offered and as it was received. Trevor and his father's evening trip to the inner city to see one man made them personally aware of the problem, and they spread that awareness to others.

Trevor began to organize a blanket collection at his church and school. Then, he began advertising for blankets. Then, food was collected along with the blankets. Soon, a distribution center called Trevor's Place was opened as a permanent place for distributing emergency supplies to people in need.

Trevor has received a visit from Archbishop Tutu. As a teenager, he has volunteered on two occasions to work with Mother Theresa's hospice program in India. Though he is no longer involved with Trevor's Place, his vital ministry of caring continues in new forms while the movement he started that cold winter evening still goes on with many people taking his place.

Every member of this Council has heard the discouraging words being written and spoken about the church school. But, here is a living example of one child's motivation sparked by his participation in the life of a congregation. I use Trevor's story because it comes to my mind as I think about the best of Christian education in our congregations. But, I could cite a hundred other examples growing out of the experiences of adults and youth who have had their lives changed through their exposure to the Gospel of Jesus Christ in conferences, seminars and church school settings. We often hear the critics but in my travels I also meet many who come up to me and tell me how they found a personal relationship with Our Lord and have been baptized and received into the community of the Episcopal Church. They witness to how their faith is being nourished and sustained in the congregations of our church. They witness, in fact, to all that the Task Force and I want Christian education to be and in so doing, they show us another fruit of Christian education. More and more, the Episcopal Church is becoming the church of choice by thousands of adults.

A physician stands before his congregation during an adult forum and announces that, as a result of an in-depth lay theological education program, he can now see the direct connection between his faith and his medical practice. From the same congregation come these words of tribute from another person involved in the same four-year adult theological education program: "This program has provided me with a long needed knowledge of our Biblical tradition and a strengthened appreciation of God's presence in Jesus Christ. Participation in the seminar and weekly preparation for it are demanding, exciting, and nourishing. Our study brings new meaning to my life to date and I think I am beginning to experience some modification of my view of the world --- which is sometimes unsettling."

The Gospel has come alive for Trevor and for many, many other people through their involvement in the total life of congregations. It is my experience that, when we are aware and sensitive to the educational implications of all that we do in the Church, we provide not only particular teaching aids but all that we do teaches. Christian education is faith formation and all that we do, from vestry meetings -- to soup kitchens -- to worship services -- to sermons -- to the stewardship call -- all that we do is a part of faith formation. That is the good news.

My deep concern as your Presiding Bishop is that the accusation that our people are biblically and theologically illiterate has some grounding in truth. Until we are awakened to the Word and its implications, we shall stumble about as a people with amnesia; as a people with no vision and no direction. The vital Word of God must be heard. It must be interpreted and struggled with in the life of each Christian. It must be lived out -- and reflected on -- in and for our times. How do we understand and respond to what is happening to us and to our world in the light of the story of God's redeeming presence in our world? How do we as individuals as the gathered Church evidence our commitment to the poor and to the oppressed of the World? These are the broad questions that we must constantly hold

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DPS 87254/5

before us. We, who are called to the leadership in the Church today, must encourage and nurture the education process that lies behind those questions if we are to be a Church in mission.

We, who are called to the leadership in the Church today, must be able to discern the totality of Christian education and the particularities of it. We must be able to hold onto the broader mission of faith formation while we deal with its many parts --- such as Bible study, church history, theological reflection and formation, ethics and morals, liturgics. We must not confuse the two, thinking that if we develop, publish and distribute a curriculum for confirmation instruction we have addressed the broader issue of faith formation. On the other hand, we must not think that the proliferation of church seminars will provide the vital linkage to the faith of the apostles. If we are going to have quality Christian education, we must provide both quality content and context for learning and living.

The primary textbooks for the Episcopal Church are the Bible and the Book of Common Prayer. The curriculum is the life of the congregation as it struggles to witness to the Gospel in the world. The books, the videos, the teacher's guides, the arts and crafts --- all these provide resources to the rich curriculum already operative in every congregation in our Church.

We can provide the most comprehensive textbooks for use in preparing young people for confirmation. But, if young people are second class citizens in a congregation, if they have no place in the worship, in the decision making process of their base community of faith, what do they really learn?

We can provide the most intensive courses in Church History, luxuriously recalling the ecclesiastical names, the edicts, the councils, the dates. But, if churchpeople cannot connect these people, places and events into a working model for the decisions of contemporary life, what do they really learn?

We can provide the most aggressive experience of life for our parishioners, we can recruit thousands of volunteers to assist in soup kitchens, to march for peace, to send letters to Congress on a variety of issues, to visit the sick and homebound. But, if these same individuals are not afforded the opportunity to reflect theologically on their experience, if they are not enabled to discover that their feeding, healing and compassionate ministry is grounded in the example of Jesus, what do they learn?

We can provide the penultimate curriculum in the history and theology of the Book of Common Prayer, we can herald the renewal of communal worship, we can move altars, dabble in ecclesiastical haberdashery and patronize liturgical dance and music. But, if the full spiritual lives of Episcopalians are not enriched, if their personal prayer and devotional lives are not nurtured, if they are not put in touch with the life of the spirit, what do they learn?

In my recent address to the House of Bishops, I said that:  
"I am going to invest the resources of this Church in developing educational

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programs to enable, to enrich, and to empower the people of God for mission. I believe that the harvest is plenteous and we must provide adequate resources to recruit, nourish and support the laborers in the mission field. Every Episcopalian is a missionary. Faith put to work. Faith at work in the streets, faith put to work in the office, faith put to work in the hospital, faith put to work in the criminal justice system. I envision an educational process with the necessary resources to nourish, expand and support the faithful of all ages through a lifelong program of action, reflection, study, prayers, meditation and common worship. Total education for total ministry.

I hope that the message that proceeds from our deliberations is loud and clear:

- Every congregation must be challenged to discern into what mission God is calling it.
- Every congregation must be challenged to identify the specific resources needed to carry out the ministries implied in the mission.
- Every Episcopalian must be challenged to be a missionary and an evangelist.
- Every leader in this church must be challenged to be an educator. And, every educator must be challenged to be a leader.
- Our educators must be challenged to provide specific resources to support the teaching of our Anglican heritage and traditions, as well as the role and mission of our Anglican Communion today.
- Our educators must be challenged to accumulate our shared symbols, and the shared information that the symbols represent, so that we can communicate effectively with one another and with our partners in our global communion.

Christian education does not exist in a vacuum. The mission imperatives will provide form, direction and integration of our educational ministries with all the other activities of our Church.

This Council has aptly introduced the subject of Christian education to our open agenda for discernment and discussion. To this end, we must now move beyond our criticism of our Christian education and we must provide the incentive and support which will enable life giving faith formation in the Episcopal Church. I ask every member of this Council to give attention to this concern as we proceed in moving from a definition of the mission imperatives to their programmatic and budgetary implications.

In preparation for this meeting, I mailed you a copy of my statement on mission, WHERE THERE IS NO VISION, THE PEOPLE PERISH, which is the introduction to the mission imperatives. At the request of the Council, I prepared this theological reflection to accompany the mission imperatives. The document that you have in front of you is the collective work of the Continuation Committee, which met in July to finish editorial work on the imperatives, and the work of the Church Center Staff, especially the Mission Operations Management Team and the Mission Support Group. The document has been reviewed and affirmed by the Church Center Staff, which has begun the

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DPS 87254/7

process of identifying the programmatic and budgetary implications. The process with the Church Center Staff was not without the frustration and pain that accompanies such deep structural and systemic change. However, the process brought forward a rewarding cohesiveness and integration of the mission imperatives. As a part of this meetings agenda, George McGonigle, Ellen Cooke and Barry Menuez, along with members of the Mission Operations Team will make a full report to us.

I shared the mission imperatives with the recent meeting of the House of Bishops. I want you to know of the overwhelmingly enthusiastic reception that the bishops gave the imperatives. And, everywhere I have gone since that meeting of the House of Bishops people who have read the imperatives have given their positive endorsement. The clear message that I get over and over as I visit with churchpeople, and as they share with me through their correspondence, is that the imperatives accurately reflect the mission of our Church, that individuals and identify with the imperatives, that the imperatives are inclusive, and, most importantly, we, the leadership should not flinch or lose our nerve when dealing with the implications.

Let me repeat what I have written in the vision statement: "The vision that lies before us is not static. It is dynamic. It is ever-shifting, it is even a little frightening. It is charged by the lightening and thunder of the prophets' voices: act justly, love mercy, walk humbly before God. It shines with the mission of Jesus who was sent by his Father to bring good news to the poor, to proclaim liberty to captives and new sight to the blind, to free the oppressed, to proclaim the year of the Lord's favor. The vision is of the Incarnation, of all of us reaching out with Christ's compassionate hands to our brothers and sisters in need. The vision is one of salvation fused with justice. The mission is in and of Christ.

"The vision we are following is not new. And yet each time in history that God has called it forth, it is unique, and compelling in its massive power to transform, to change, to supercharge. This vision can truly change us, transform us, remake us, the people of God, in the image of God. It calls us to faithful worship and service. It is a vision that makes great demands of us -- but it promises nothing less than everything."

I want to thank this Council for the hard work and sensitivity that enabled the vision and mission imperatives to be brought forward. The process over the past year has been difficult but I sense the forging of a deep partnership as we have all worked together. This partnership will serve us well as we move on towards Convention.

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Church Center Holiday Closings

The Episcopal Church Center will be closed Dec. 24 & 25 and Dec. 31 & Jan 1. for the Christmas and New Year holidays. Therefore, this is the last regularly scheduled mailing of the News Service for 1987. The Communication Office staff wish to extend best wishes for a Merry Christmas and blessed New Year.

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Episcopal Communicators Meet

Dave Corbin reminds all members of the Episcopal Communicators to save April 18-21 for the 1988 meeting of the group which will be hosted by the Diocese of Northern California at the Christ the King retreat center, Sacramento. Although Dave's planning committee is still at work on the agenda, he says the meeting will include workshops, worship, tours, fun and frolic at the 35-acre center. Costs will be in line with those of past meetings. A complete brochure and registration form will be mailed in late January to members.

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Oops!

In DPS 87229 "Lay Youth Ministry Takes 'Root'", which ran Nov. 12, the young man identified in the story and photograph as Scott Slater should have been identified as Brooks Keith, which is who it really is. The News Service regrets the error.

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General Convention Photo Contest

In Monument Valley National Park, the approach to one breathtaking rock formation is guarded by a plaque on which a number of photographs are displayed. All the photos are of the formation in view and none capture its grandeur. The art department of the Episcopal Church Center is issuing a similar challenge. Do you have or can you take a photograph that will illustrate the essence of one or more of the eight mission imperatives that the Presiding Bishop and Executive Council have agreed contain the irreducible minimum of the Church's Mission?

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DPS 87255/2

Art Director Rochelle Arthur and the planning committee for the Church Center Exhibit Area are sponsoring a contest to select the best photo illustrations of the Imperatives. Blow-ups of the winning entries will be a major design element at the Center Exhibit which will be seen by all who come to Cobo Hall for the General Convention.

Entrants can be black & white or color, slides or prints, but the original slide or negative must be available for reproduction and all submissions become the property of the art department. All entries must be submitted by March 31, 1988. Send submissions to Rochelle Arthur, Office of Communication, Episcopal Church Center, 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017.

Prizes will be awarded.

The Imperatives are:

- I Inspire others by serving them and leading them to seek, follow, and serve Jesus Christ through membership in his Church.
- II Develop and promote educational systems and resources which support the ministry of the people of God.
- III Strengthen and affirm the partnership of the Episcopal Church within the Anglican Communion in proclaiming and serving God's Kingdom throughout the world.
- IV Communicate in a compelling way the work of the Church in response to the Gospel.
- V Strive for justice and peace among all people and respect the dignity of every human being.
- VI Act in faithful stewardship in response to the biblical teaching of the right use of God's creation.
- VII Support individuals and families in their struggle for wholeness by knowing and living the values of the Gospel.
- VIII Commit ourselves to the unity of the Church and of all God's people.

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